IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:

a body having an inner surface defining a cavity;

a lid having an inner surface and movable between an open position in which said lid does not fully cover said cavity and a closed position in which said inner surface of said lid defines an upper boundary of said cavity and in which said lid fully covers said cavity; and

a hinge assembly interconnecting said body to said lid, said hinge assembly completely enclosed within said cavity when said lid is in said closed position and including a first mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said body, a second mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said lid, and a coupling assembly pivotally coupling said first and second mounting members to each other[, wherein said hinge assembly is completely enclosed within said cavity when said lid is in said closed position].

10. (Amended) The saddlebag of claim 9, wherein said pivot axis is moved closer to said hinge assembly as said lid is moved toward said open position, such that the motion of said lid with respect to said body transitions from substantially [purely] translational motion to substantially [purely] rotational motion.

Please cancel claim 11 without prejudice.

12. (Amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising a lid and a body each having external surfaces, said lid and body being coupled to each other with a coupling assembly to facilitate opening and closing of said lid with respect to said body, said saddlebag further comprising a chrome plating adhered to said external surface of at least one of said lid and body, said [The saddlebag of claim 11, wherein] one of said lid and body being [is] constructed of an ABS/polycarbonate blend [plated with chrome plating].

13. (Amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:

an injection-molded body defining a cavity, said body having a body lip formed integrally with said body and defining a mouth of said cavity;

a gasket positioned on said body lip; and

a lid having a lid lip, said lid being movably mounted to said body to open and close said saddlebag, said gasket being sandwiched between said lid lip and said body lip when said lid is in a closed position;

wherein said lid lip is manufactured separately from the rest of said lid, said lid lip including an undercut, said lid including a lid edge and at least one internal gusset, wherein said lid lip undercut is positioned on said lid lip edge and said lid lip is further in contact with said gusset such that said gusset reduces shear stress on said lid lip, said lid lip being glued to said lid.

Please cancel claim 14 without prejudice.

15. (Amended) The saddlebag of claim 13, further comprising a hinge coupling said lid to said body, wherein said hinge [including means for moving] is configured to move said lid in a substantially translational manner away from said body during opening of said saddlebag such that substantially all portions of said lid lip substantially entirely and simultaneously disengage said gasket, said hinge [also including means for pivoting] further configured to pivot said lid with respect to said body once said gasket has been substantially entirely disengaged.

17. (Amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:

a lid;

a body;

a hinge assembly coupling said lid to said body and defining at least two non-collinear pivot axes;

a biasing member interconnecting said lid and said body, said biasing member biasing said lid toward an open position; and

a latch interconnecting said lid and said body when said lid is in a closed position, said latch resisting the biasing force of said biasing member to hold said lid in said closed position until said latch is disconnected.

22. (Amended) [The method of claim 21, further comprising] A method for making a motorcycle saddlebag having a lid and a body, the method comprising:

providing a hinge assembly having first and second mounting members;

mounting the first mounting member inside the lid;

mounting the second mounting member inside the body; and

interconnecting the first and second mounting members with a coupling assembly, the coupling assembly and the mounting members cooperating to define a four bar linkage [to enable said acts of translational movement and rotational movement].

23. (Amended) [The method of claim 21, further comprising] A method for operating a motorcycle saddlebag having a lid and a body, the method comprising:

mounting a push button latching mechanism to one of the lid and body;

biasing the lid toward a fully open position with a biasing member;

interconnecting the lid to the body with the latching mechanism when the lid is closed;

resisting the biasing force of the biasing member with the latching mechanism;

releasing the latching mechanism in response to actuation of the push button; and

opening the lid under the influence of the basing member after the latching mechanism is released, wherein opening the lid includes moving the lid in a substantially vertical translational manner with respect to the body to a partially open position, and then moving the lid in a substantially rotational manner with respect to the body to the fully open position.

Please add the following new claims.

24. (New) A method of opening a motorcycle saddlebag having a lid, a body, and a hinge assembly coupled between the lid and the body, the hinge assembly defining an axis about which the lid is movable with respect to the body, the axis being movable between a first position further from the body and a second position closer to the body, the method comprising:

with the axis at the first position, opening the lid to a partially open position wherein the lid moves substantially vertically with respect to the body;

while the lid is moving toward the partially open position, moving the axis from the first position toward the second position; and

while the axis is moving toward the second position, opening the lid to a fully open position by pivoting the lid with respect to the body.

25. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the saddlebag further includes a biasing member between the lid and the body, and wherein the method further comprises:

biasing the lid toward the partially and fully open positions with the biasing member.

26. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the saddlebag further includes a latching mechanism between the lid and the body, the latching mechanism operable to maintain the lid in a closed position by resisting a biasing force generated by the biasing mechanism, and wherein the method further comprises:

releasing the latching mechanism to open the lid.

27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the latching mechanism includes a push button, and wherein releasing the latching mechanism includes depressing the push button.

28. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the hinge assembly includes first and second mounting members and first and second coupling members interconnected to define a four bar linkage, and wherein moving the axis from the first position to the second position results from the movement of the first and second mounting members and first and second coupling members.

29. (New) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:

a body having an inner surface defining a cavity;

a lid having an inner surface and movable between an open position in which said lid does not fully cover said cavity and a closed position in which said inner surface of said lid defines an upper boundary of said cavity and in which said lid fully covers said cavity; and

a hinge assembly interconnecting said body to said lid, said hinge assembly including a first mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said body, a second mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said lid, and a coupling assembly pivotally coupling said first and second mounting members to each other, wherein said coupling assembly defines a pivot axis about which said lid is pivotal with respect to said body, and wherein said coupling assembly is configured to move said pivot axis with respect to said body as said lid is opened and closed.

30. (New) The motorcycle saddlebag of claim 29, wherein said hinge assembly is completely enclosed within said cavity when said lid is in said closed position.

31. (New) The saddlebag of claim 29, wherein said pivot axis is moved closer to said hinge assembly as said lid is moved toward said open position, such that the motion of said lid with respect to said body transitions from substantially translational motion to substantially rotational motion.